

Testimony before the CGA Appropriations Committee
Public Hearing on Proposed FY 23 Adjustments for Higher Ed Agencies
February 22, 2022
Submitted by Carmen Yiamouyiannis

Thank you, Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Hartley, Representatives Dathan and Nolan, and members of the Appropriations Committee for the opportunity to address you today.

My name is Carmen Yiamouyiannis. I am a resident of West Hartford, CT.

I work at Capital Community College as a Biology Professor. I am writing to express my strong support for ensuring our community college system is sufficiently funded so we can serve our students and communities.

I support the Board of Regents request for additional funding for our community college system. Increased funding is critically necessary to ensure we can provide high-quality services to our students and communities. I have seen our services in our community colleges decline due to understaffing and insufficient resources. CCC offers 20+ chemistry classes a semester and we have one full time chem professor who will be retiring in June. We have been pushing to hire another chemistry professor for years and we have been told that we don't have the money.

In the recent Board of Regents Finance Meeting, the BOR Finance Committee proposed a 5% tuition increase for students. I disagree with our community college system increasing tuition on our students. I disagree with tuition increases because so many of our students are already struggling to balance their school, work, and family demands. Increasing tuition continues to shift the burden of education to those in our communities with the least resources.

The Board of Regents for Higher Education is currently threatening to layoff student-facing community college employees. This is reprehensible, particularly given the fact that over the past three years the Board of Regents and CSCU managers have hired dozens of managers – Regional Presidents, Vice Presidents, Associate Vice Presidents – costing millions of dollars. These management positions are completely redundant, wasteful, and are siphoning resources away from community college campuses.

Our public higher education system needs more resources so we can fulfill our mission of providing pathways to higher education, gainful employment, and life-changing knowledge and skills to the residents of CT. Thank you for all of your efforts to support this. Please think of our STUDENTS!